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# **The USSR and the Third World**

**National Intelligence Estimate**

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**THE USSR AND  
THE THIRD WORLD**

Information available as of 13 September 1984  
was used in the preparation of this Estimate.

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### SCOPE NOTE

Despite the diversity—political, economic, cultural, and racial—of the Third World, the USSR since the time of Lenin has viewed it as a whole and as a weak link of the West and has fashioned policies to gain influence there. These policies have undergone some changes reflecting Soviet adjustment to changed circumstances in the Third World and Soviet capabilities for exploiting new opportunities. This National Intelligence Estimate examines Soviet policies toward the Third World in the last 10 years and assesses the outlook for the remainder of the 1980s.

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## KEY JUDGMENTS

The Third World will continue to be the most volatile arena of US-Soviet political struggle in the coming years. Its inherent instability will continue to present the USSR with tempting targets to expand Soviet influence at Western expense. We believe that Moscow, despite an array of obstacles and constraints, will seek as vigorously as it has in the recent past to press its decades-old strategy of Third World penetration.

Moscow's efforts in the Third World began in earnest in the 1950s. Although the USSR in some instances failed conspicuously, as for example in Indonesia, Ghana, Sudan, and Egypt, Soviet influence and presence in the Third World have expanded considerably. This overall Soviet advance has bolstered the USSR's claim to be a global power, and has created new threats to US and Western interests. Now the Soviets have:

- Access to distant air and naval facilities in some eight countries.
- Military assistance programs in some 34 additional Third World countries.
- Treaties of friendship and cooperation with 10 Third World associates.
- An increased capability to mount airlift and sealift to distant places.
- New pro-Soviet regimes in southern Africa, Central America, and South and Southeast Asia.
- Substantial means for undercutting US interests in the Third World by encouraging and supporting opposition groups, subversion, and insurrection.

These Soviet gains were facilitated by the emergence of exploitable opportunities, particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa and Central America, by inhibitions of US policy in the immediate post-Vietnam period, by the USSR's growing military capabilities, and by a more subtle blending of tactics.

Over the years, Moscow has refined and improved such techniques and instruments of policy as:

- A willingness to deal with a wide ideological range of governments and opposition groups.

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- The exploitation of residual Third World anticolonialism and anti-US sentiments in particular areas.
- The training and education of increasing numbers of Third World students, military personnel, and political cadres.
- Friendship treaties to symbolize and dramatize the Soviet presence in the Third World.
- An increase of arms sales to the Third World.
- The use of active measures.<sup>1</sup>
- The use of naval and airlift capabilities to “show the flag” and, in the absence of major opposition, to project limited power into the Third World.

Since the mid-1970s the USSR has also given special attention to other techniques:

- The sale of more sophisticated weapon systems to favored clients.
- The extensive employment of intermediaries to train intelligence services, to provide technical aid, and (in the case of the Cubans) to deploy combat troops in defense of certain Third World regimes.
- Perhaps most important, more emphasis on the training of intelligence and security services and the provision of Praetorian guards to bolster client regimes and institutionalize Soviet influence, in the hope of preventing a repetition of earlier setbacks.

For the future, the primary *Soviet objectives in the Third World* will continue to be:

- *To obtain political support from Third World entities* against the United States and the West or at least to weaken their ties to the West.
- *To promote the creation of Marxist regimes* closely allied with the USSR, and to protect those regimes, especially from internal opposition.
- *To gain, or deny to the West, access to naval and air facilities* that would be useful in promoting Moscow's foreign policy goals and that could be used in some crisis or wartime situation.

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<sup>1</sup> The Soviet term *active measures* is used to distinguish influence operations from espionage and counterintelligence. Soviet active measures involve activities by virtually every element of the Soviet party and state structure and supplement traditional diplomacy. They include manipulation of the media, written or oral disinformation, use of foreign Communist parties and fronts, clandestine radio, economic activities, military operations, and other political influence operations.



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- *To divert and distract the United States* by sponsoring or supporting challenges in the world—some major, some minor.
- *To establish commercial relations*, so as to acquire hard currency and cheap raw materials, and pave the way for closer political ties.
- *To prevent China from enhancing its role in the Third World.*
- Over the longer term, *to enhance Soviet access to regions rich in strategic raw materials*, and to create the potential to hinder Western access.

In pursuing these objectives, the Soviets have continued to differentiate among Third World regions according to their strategic value:

- *The Middle East and Southwest Asia region has always been and remains by far the USSR's most important Third World target* primarily because of its proximity to the USSR and its centrality to the larger East-West struggle. We expect, therefore, to see Moscow place great emphasis in the years ahead on broadening its influence with Arab states and exploiting any opening for penetration of Iran.
- In *South Asia* the Soviets have the ability to bring military force to bear. Their occupation of Afghanistan has put Soviet forces on the border with Pakistan for the first time, and increased their ability to threaten Iran. But *armed resistance by Afghan rebels has obliged the USSR to concentrate on preserving the pro-Soviet regime in Kabul. The Soviets are also maintaining their close relations with India*, and are trying to induce that country to bring pressure against Pakistan in order to undermine Islamabad's support of the Afghan resistance.
- *Southeast Asia is important to Moscow because of its potential for containing China.*
- *Africa and Latin America are of less direct strategic importance to Moscow, but are useful sites of influence for diverting US resources and fortifying an image of expanding Soviet power. Central America is particularly useful in this context.*

In pursuit of these objectives, *Soviet strategy will in particular stress:*

- *Support and control of radical regimes.* Both directly and through intermediaries the Soviets will want to make Marxist revolutions irreversible in those countries—Ethiopia, Angola,

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Mozambique, Afghanistan, and Nicaragua—that are currently threatened by insurgents.

- *Extensive use of intermediaries*, especially East Europeans and Cubans. For their own reasons the Cubans are likely to continue to provide combat troops to prop up regimes like those in Angola and Ethiopia, and to be on the cutting edge of support to revolutionary regimes in Central America. Moscow's other associates will continue to furnish the USSR valuable services on occasion in the form of base rights, support of insurrection, and the applying of military, political, and subversive pressures.
- *Supply of sophisticated weaponry to certain Third World states*, such as conventionally armed short-range ballistic missiles, more advanced fighter aircraft, and modern naval platforms and systems, which might alter, but not necessarily upset, local or regional balances of power, and will probably require reassurance by the United States and matching support to its own regional friends.
- *Military-political use of the USSR's expanding military power*. Soviet military capabilities in distant areas of the Third World have improved, but remain constrained by certain limitations and deficiencies of equipment, organization, and force structure. These deficiencies are likely to limit major Soviet advances into distant areas within the time frame of this Estimate. Nonetheless, the Soviets are working to overcome these deficiencies. New systems likely to come into the inventory in the early 1990s will widen the range of Soviet options in distant areas and will complicate US policy in the Third World.
- *Soviet refusal to curb Third World activities in the interest of better relations with the United States*. Although the Soviets realize that their aggressive actions have carried some costs and have affected the overall approach of the West toward the Soviet Union, we do not expect the threat of political or economic sanctions will prevent the Soviets from exploiting a major opportunity to penetrate a key area such as Iran or the Arabian Peninsula.

*Constraints and vulnerabilities the USSR will face in the Third World will influence its strategy and prospects to a greater extent than during the late 1970s.* Moscow's successes in the Third World have also created vulnerabilities that may lead to Soviet setbacks. To an important degree the USSR's successes in the last decade were due to

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special circumstances. *In future Third World efforts the Soviets will confront an array of obstacles*, including:

- The *renewed US effort* to oppose further Soviet and pro-Soviet advances in the Third World; and the inability of the USSR to match the much greater power projection capabilities of the United States.
- The *new imperial problems* created by the USSR's successes in the 1970s. There is now much more of an investment to protect. The Soviets are involved in the defense of certain pro-Soviet regimes—Angola, Ethiopia, Mozambique, Afghanistan, and Nicaragua—all of which are confronting varying degrees of active insurgency.
- *An almost certain rise of economic distress in many parts of the Third World, and an unwillingness on the part of the USSR to furnish needed assistance, investment funds, and markets for Third World exports.* It is possible that one or more Third World countries may turn to the USSR for financial aid and may even repudiate debts to Western creditors. Most Third World governments, however, will almost certainly consider that their economic expectations can be best met if they cooperate with the international lending agencies (from which the Soviets are frozen out), and will look to the West for economic succor.
- *Growing economic difficulties within the USSR*, complicating Soviet efforts to bear the sharply rising burden of supporting Cuba, Vietnam, and other costly associates in the Third World (and Eastern Europe). This type of constraint will probably not be great enough in itself, however, to deter the Soviets from taking on new clients if particularly promising opportunities arise.
- *A widespread—indeed growing—desire among Third World leaders not to permit Soviet or pro-Soviet elements to gain influence over their countries' destinies:* a desire to use the USSR without becoming fatally caught in its embrace. This will apply as well for the USSR's own clients. These entities are more than Soviet agents; they have their own policy aims, some of which will on occasion conflict with Soviet aims.

*The Soviets, nevertheless, still view the Third World as the Achilles' heel of the West, and will persevere in their efforts to enhance their power and influence there.* Although the special circumstances of the 1970s are not necessarily repeatable, the instability and turmoil likely to prevail in much of the Third World in the late 1980s

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will assure the Soviets abundant opportunities to make advances. The Soviets will continue to give top priority to efforts to gain influence in the Middle East and the Persian Gulf. Soviet willingness to probe for openings and advantages in an area of such high sensitivity to both the USSR and the West will inevitably give rise to risks of miscalculation and possible superpower confrontation.

*But Soviet prospects for success in the Middle East as well as in the rest of the Third World will depend more than ever on the interplay of a number of new factors, some of which will be beyond the direct control of the Kremlin decisionmakers:*

- *The capability of the Soviet Union to deploy forces and provide advanced weapons to countries in distant areas will continue to grow. But acquisition of modern military technology gives relatively weak countries the ability to challenge limited deployments of modern naval and air power.*
- Another variable is the capability of the USSR to cope with low-intensity warfare of the type now besetting a number of Soviet client states. *It is by no means certain that all pro-Soviet regimes can maintain power in their own countries.* If a Soviet client regime were to be overthrown by anti-Soviet insurgents, or reached a compromise with the internal opposition by ousting the Soviets, the consequences for Soviet prestige in the Third World would be adverse, but hard to assess at this stage.
- *Turbulence in the Third World will not be easily controlled and may precipitate events that neither superpower would find desirable. It is even conceivable that the United States and the USSR will find themselves taking parallel actions to prevent escalation of some conflicts, especially in volatile areas and situations—such as the Koreas, or the Iran-Iraq or Lebanon-Syria-Israel arenas. In the main, however, the Soviets will see regional troubles as presenting opportunities to advance Soviet power.*

There is a possibility that, facing a variety of obstacles, particularly the intractability of the Third World to great-power dictates or more vigorous US political and military actions to combat their influence, the Soviets might deliberately restrain their actions in some low-priority area to buy time for later opportunities, or in deference to larger East-West concerns. However, they would be very unlikely to see this as a permanent retrenchment. They would in no case accept explicit limitations on their claimed prerogative to expand their power in the Third World.

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*In sum, we believe the Soviets will continue to see their actions in the Third World primarily as an essential element of East-West rivalry. The Soviet approach will oblige the West to address the challenge of Soviet power and more sophisticated tactics, but this should not obscure the social and economic problems that pave the way for Soviet penetration. This means that the key external variables determining Soviet Third World prospects will be the stability or lack of it in Third World societies; the economic health of the United States, Europe, and Japan; and the durability of US internationalist foreign policy, military strength, and national will to commit considerable power and resources to the Third World arena.*

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## DISCUSSION

SOVIET OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES  
IN THE THIRD WORLD

## Before the Mid-1970s

1. Moscow's interest in the revolutionary potential of what we call the Third World dates to the earliest days of the Soviet regime. Lenin characterized the colonial world as the "weak link" of imperialism, and the Second Congress of the Third Communist International in 1920 accepted his argument that nationalism and anti-imperialism were revolutionary forces that deserved support. Over the next three decades, the Soviets, largely through the auspices of the Comintern, provided moral and, at times, some financial aid to fledgling Communist parties in Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the Middle East. The USSR also extended some state-to-state economic assistance but mainly to states on the USSR's border such as Iran, Afghanistan, and Turkey. For the most part, however, both the Communists and national bourgeoisie in the colonial world were left to their own devices as the Soviets concentrated on internal or European affairs.

2. It was only after Stalin's death that the Soviets began a major effort to exploit perceived opportunities and Western vulnerabilities in the Third World. The dissolution of the West European empires and the USSR's economic recovery from World War II seemed to increase the Soviet potential for establishing influence in newly independent countries in Africa and Asia. To many Third World elites the USSR seemed a bastion of anticolonialism and a model for socialist development. Moscow offered economic and military aid to new regimes and cultivated those rulers and elites deemed susceptible to Soviet influence.

3. The first decade of the new activism in the Third World was marked by the ebullience and optimism that characterized the Khrushchev era but did not produce the expected results. Although Khrushchev's successors made clear that they intended to put relations with the Third World on a more orderly footing, they too ran into problems. They suffered a major defeat in Egypt when President Sadat expelled Soviet military advisers and established a cordial relationship with the United States. Soviet failures there as well as

in Mali, Ghana, Indonesia, Sudan, and Somalia were in large part attributable to inability to appreciate local politics and social structures, regional rivalries, heavy-handedness in dealing with Third World peoples, insufficient attention to bolstering the internal security services of client rulers, and insufficient or inappropriate economic and military measures to consolidate Third World gains. Besides these deficiencies, Soviet progress in the Third World was adversely affected by changed circumstances there and changed relations of the Soviet client states with the West. Nevertheless, the Soviets were beginning to acquire the naval and airlift capabilities permitting them to "show the flag" and, in the absence of major opposition, to project limited military power into the Third World. On the whole, however, Moscow's ambitious pretensions to influence throughout the Third World during the 1950s and 1960s were not matched by its gains.

## From the Mid-1970s

4. Soviet policy toward the Third World became more sophisticated in the mid-1970s, and the Soviets after some initial hesitation moved aggressively to exploit new openings. This new policy stemmed largely from the confluence of new opportunities and improved capabilities.

5. The Soviets had become a strategic superpower in their own eyes and, they believed, in the eyes of the rest of the world:

- They had acquired rough parity with the United States in intercontinental warfare capabilities.
- Their modernization and strengthening of their large general purpose armies and tactical air forces increased their confidence that they could prevail in a conventional conflict in any of the major theaters of war on the USSR's continental periphery in Europe, Southwest Asia, and the Far East.
- Their efforts in the 1950s and 1960s had resulted in some increase in naval and airlift capabilities.
- They could count on Cuba and East European allies to act as surrogates in certain Third World situations.

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6. Moreover, the Soviets perceived that the world scene was shifting in ways more favorable to their aims. They judged that:

- The Vietnam experience and other factors had reduced the willingness of the United States to engage its power in the Third World.
- The capitalist world as a whole had been weakened by the oil price revolution and a series of recessions.
- The oil boycott underscored the importance of oil resources to the West, and new oil earnings of the Arabs opened opportunities for the Soviets to expand arms sales for hard currency.

7. New developments in the Third World provided major opportunities for the Soviets:

- The collapse of the Portuguese empire in Africa led to new opportunities, especially in Angola, where a civil war broke out. Taking advantage of US diffidence, the Soviets and Cubans helped their favored faction take power and in the process established themselves in the country.
- Junior officers in Ethiopia overturned Haile Selassie's feudal state and turned to the Soviets for aid. The Soviets responded and, with the Cubans, quickly made themselves guarantors of the new regime's internal security, as well as assisting it to combat the threat from Somalia.
- A Marxist-Leninist regime came to power in Afghanistan.
- Sino-Vietnamese hostility gave the Soviets new leverage and ultimately access to facilities in Vietnam.

8. Other events seemed to augur new successes:

- The revolution in Iran not only liquidated a powerful pro-US regime, but gave rise to a possibility for eventual Soviet penetration of a very important country and the entire Persian Gulf region.
- The downfall of the Shah called into question the US post-Vietnam strategy toward the Third World, that of relying on powerful regional allies to maintain regional influence.
- Longstanding economic and social problems in Central America were creating a revolutionary ferment, with the potential for exploitation by Cuba and the USSR.

9. Despite the lack of any appreciable gains in the Third World in the last few years, the Soviet balance sheet since the mid-1970s is impressive. In addition to Cuba, now even more dependent on Soviet support than in the past, the Soviets today play a significant role in Vietnam, Ethiopia (albeit at the cost of their expulsion from Somalia), Libya, South Yemen, Angola, Syria, and Nicaragua, and have acquired access to naval and air facilities in most of these states. The invasion of Afghanistan, despite the damage to the USSR's prestige and the inconclusive character of Soviet operations there, has put Soviet forces on the border with Pakistan for the first time and increased their capability to threaten Iran. The Soviet-Indian relationship, which dates back to the 1950s, has been maintained as a quasi-alliance of mutual convenience and fluctuating intimacy. In sum, since the mid-1970s the Soviets have established themselves in a number of new locations in the Third World and, despite the new US activism typified by Grenada and several anti-regime and anti-Soviet insurgencies, have—so far at least—been expelled from none.

## INSTRUMENTS OF SOVIET THIRD WORLD POLICY

10. Soviet successes in the Third World result in large part from sheer persistence. But, over the years, they have also refined some older techniques and developed some new ones to enhance their access to Third World states and to maintain their influence in places where it has been established.

### Tactical Flexibility

11. The Soviets have shown a willingness to deal with a wide ideological range of governments and opposition groups, rather than concentrate their attention solely on pro-Soviet or Marxist Third World entities. The USSR has at times extended military aid in generous amounts to Egypt, Syria, and Iraq, all of which have openly persecuted domestic Communist parties. The Soviets also are pragmatic in expanding and improving ties with nonaligned states—such as Jordan, Kuwait, Nigeria, Argentina, and Peru—that have mixed economies and that do not necessarily line up in support of Soviet diplomatic positions.

12. The Soviets are particularly active in exploiting those situations in the Third World where local perceptions of US policies have created the greatest susceptibility to anti-US agitation. The longstanding US alliance with Israel, the black African perception

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of a softness of US attitudes toward South Africa, and the historical association of the United States with Latin American elites provide the USSR with significantly enhanced entree to the Arab world, black Africa, and a sizable spectrum of Latin American opinion. The Soviets have exploited these perceptions of the United States to establish or reinforce ties with Libya, Syria, Angola, and Nicaragua.

### Arms Exports and Economic Assistance

13. The export of weapons has become the most effective instrument of Soviet Third World policy. It creates an entree to the recipient country's military forces and a dependence on continued supply of Soviet equipment, spare parts, and advisers. In some circumstances arms agreements also foster cooperation in other areas, mainly political and diplomatic. Arms sales now account for as much as two-thirds of total Soviet exports to the Third World, and also bring in some \$7-8 billion a year in much-needed hard currency.

14. Complementing the arms program, the Soviets offer an amalgam of other types of assistance. Expectations of large Soviet economic aid have often not been realized in the past, but in the last few years economic aid to Cuba, Vietnam, Angola, and Ethiopia has risen, indicating a willingness by Moscow to commit scarce resources to high-priority targets, even in a time of domestic economic difficulty. The Soviets are providing an extensive advisory and technical presence in Africa and the Middle East, and are currently training more than 50,000 Third World students in the USSR.<sup>2</sup> Cuba and Eastern Europe are also devoting considerable domestic resources to the training and education of many thousands of students, military personnel, and political cadres from the Third World. Moreover, Third World states have become more pragmatic and are taking advantage of low Soviet financing fees. Despite these efforts, there can be no question that the appeal of Soviet economic assistance and of the Soviet model of economic development has lost much of the potential it once had in the Third World for enhancing Soviet influence.

### Active Measures

15. Active measures constitute another technique used frequently by the Soviets and their East Europe-

an and Cuban associates. In Iran, India, and some African and Latin American countries forged documents, distorted and untrue statements attributed to Westerners, and other efforts to influence local political decisions and embarrass the United States and its allies have had some effect on local elites and have advanced Soviet policies.

16. The USSR is making a concerted effort to influence the news output of developing countries. A typical Soviet arrangement provides for two-way communications links between TASS—Moscow's official news agency—and the news agency of a Third World country, exchanges of correspondents, and the services of an engineer to maintain TASS equipment. The Soviets also subsidize some journalists from Third World countries who work in Moscow. Representatives of TASS and the feature agency Novosti—many of whom are KGB officers—routinely provide local editors with Soviet material and recruit agents of influence in information ministries and national news agencies. The Soviets are also working within UNESCO to "break the monopoly" of Western media services in the Third World. The campaign is having some success and, as more Soviet-trained or Soviet-subsidized Third World journalists rise to important positions in their own countries, Soviet opportunities for influence will increase.

### Use of Intermediaries

17. The Soviet Union has become adept at employing other friendly states to act as intermediaries to assist in Third World penetration. Intervention by an intermediary offers particular advantages to the Soviets, including:

- Less risk of creating a confrontation between the superpowers.
- A rationale for plausible denial, which makes US or Western counteraction more complicated.
- Greater acceptance of the surrogate presence by local populations—in some cases, greater than the overt presence of Soviets or Westerners.
- Less damage to Soviet relations with other parties in regional or intrastate disputes.
- Less chance that the Soviets will be perceived and criticized as imperialistic, and better opportunities for Moscow to take advantage of existing anti-US sentiments.

18. The activity in the Third World of Soviet intermediaries varies in magnitude and scope from

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discreet training of intelligence services (often provided by the East Germans) and technical aid (performed by East Europeans and Cubans) to large-scale deployment of combat troops (by Cuba). East Europeans can provide technical services to Third World countries that complement Soviet military and political programs and also serve their own (East European) aims of establishing better economic and commercial relations in the Third World. The willingness of Fidel Castro to maintain Cuban combat forces in Africa and to provide a variety of aid to Central American and Caribbean leftists serves the cause of Soviet expansion and complicates US policy planning. Even though the Cuban forces in Angola have done little to slow the advance of antiregime insurgents, their presence in that shaky pro-Soviet state has helped to preserve Soviet gains. Despite their setback in Grenada, the Cubans are likely to continue to exploit anti-American sentiment in a variety of Latin American situations, to the advantage of Cuba and the USSR.

19. Libya's Colonel Qadhafi for reasons of his own is engaged in destabilization efforts in moderate, pro-Western states of Africa and the Middle East. He is also assisting revolutionary, anti-Western movements in the Philippines, the Caribbean islands, and Central America. In his Chadian intervention, he is using his extensive armory of Soviet weaponry. He employs Soviet pilots to transport equipment and troops from Libya to airbases just across the border in Chad, and uses Soviet technicians to maintain the equipment there. To the extent that he is able to destabilize Chad, raise questions in the minds of pro-Western African rulers about the worth of Western security guarantees, and threaten allies of the United States, he is serving Soviet Third World aims. The fact that the Soviets do not control his activities does not necessarily diminish his value to Soviet policy.

20. But there are limits to the ways in which intermediaries can be used effectively. Pro-Soviet governments in Ethiopia, Mozambique, Angola, and Afghanistan are too hard pressed by active and threatening insurgencies to do more for the Soviet cause than survive. South Yemen is a desperately poor country with internal political problems, Vietnam is preoccupied with establishing control over Indochina, and Libya's Qadhafi is a mercurial, unpredictable leader, not amenable to advice from the Kremlin. North Korea sometimes acts in ways useful to the Soviets, such as providing arms to Grenada. But most often North Korea's actions in the Third World are designed

to serve its own purposes. In these circumstances, the USSR is not likely to be able to count firmly on any associates except Cuba and Eastern Europe to run interference in new Third World advances.

### Internal Security Assistance

21. The Soviets have learned from their own setbacks, such as their ouster from Egypt, and from developments over which they had little control, such as Salvador Allende's downfall in Chile, that they must try to institutionalize political influence. This has caused them to give renewed attention to the goal of creating Leninist-style police-state regimes in client countries where they can do so. The Soviets have been most successful in this endeavor in Ethiopia and Angola. Moscow is, therefore, putting more emphasis on the training and enhancement of the clients' security services and intelligence organizations, drawing upon Cuban and East European expertise.

22. The Praetorian guards thus provided to client rulers are intended both to protect the local ruler and to safeguard Soviet interests by keeping the local ruler under firm Soviet direction. The Soviets are moved not so much by a desire for ideological affinity on the part of the clients as by a belief that lasting Soviet influence and protection against the changing directions of local nationalism and political factionalism require the creation of disciplined ruling elites loyal to Moscow wherever possible. The Soviets sometimes interfere in the domestic politics of unstable client states like Angola and South Yemen to assist the advancement of dependable political figures at the expense of those thought to be wavering in allegiance to the USSR. The Soviets also hope to propagate the belief in the Third World that Soviet-sponsored regimes are irreversible.

23. Either directly or through surrogates, the Soviets are engaged in training political cadres in order to bring the ruling parties of the client countries more closely in line with the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and hence more responsive to Moscow. These programs are also aimed at improving the effectiveness of the parties as instruments of local control, and at creating agents of Soviet influence. Soviet endeavors in this field have been particularly successful in Cuba, South Yemen, Angola, and Ethiopia. In Ethiopia, for example, Moscow for years has pressed Chairman Mengistu to create an Ethiopian Marxist-Leninist party and has provided ideological and political training to scores of potential party leaders. The Soviets believe

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that, by the establishment of such a party in September 1984, they have reached a more solid institutional relationship with their client, and have come closer to their aim of making the Ethiopian Marxist revolution irreversible.

### The Soviets as an Alternative to the West

24. What Moscow offers the Third World today is no longer a program for social and national development so much as an alternative to Western influence. Soviet arms deliveries and patronage for authoritarian local elites attempting to assure their own power positions are particularly important in this regard. The 10 friendship treaties signed since 1971—with Iraq, South Yemen, Syria, Angola, Congo, Ethiopia, Mozambique, Afghanistan, India, and Vietnam—illustrate Moscow's growing web of Third World ties. Friendship treaties with Somalia and Egypt, agreed upon during this period, have been abrogated. For the Third World treaty partners, the agreements constitute a reassurance that they are not totally isolated and in most cases they signify a marginal commitment by the USSR to their security. But the published treaty obligations are so vague and ambiguous that the Soviets are not bound to act in critical circumstances. For the USSR, however, the treaties have a certain symbolic value as a measurement of Soviet influence in the Third World.

### REGIONAL PRIORITIES

25. Toward the Third World as a whole, Soviet policy objectives will continue to be those that have evolved over the last 30 years:

- To gain, or deny to the West, military facilities that would be useful in promoting Moscow's foreign policy goals and that could be used in some crisis or wartime situation.
- To divert and distract the United States by sponsoring challenges in the Third World—some major, some minor.
- To obtain political support from Third World entities against the United States and the West, or at the least to weaken their ties with the West.
- To promote the creation of Marxist regimes closely allied with the USSR.
- To establish commercial relations so as to acquire hard currency and cheap raw materials and pave the way for closer political ties.
- To prevent China from enhancing its role in the Third World.

- Over the longer term, to enhance Soviet access to regions rich in strategic raw materials, and to create the potential to hinder Western access.

26. The USSR in addition to these general objectives in the Third World also has regional priorities that are based upon both geographic and functional considerations.

### Middle East and Southwest Asia

27. The Middle East and Southwest Asia area is the USSR's top-priority target in the Third World. Proximity to the Soviet Union and the security of Soviet territory, oil resources, vested interests of the United States and the West, influence over the Islamic world, and concern over the impact of revolutionary Islamic ideas on the Muslim peoples of Soviet Central Asia make this the Third World region most critical to the East-West balance of power and give it that priority. A long-range Soviet goal is to enhance influence in the Persian Gulf area to the point at which Moscow could exercise some degree of control over Persian Gulf oil with a resulting leverage over Western Europe and Japan. The Arab-Israeli dispute, the Gulf war, and the Soviets' willingness to supply arms promptly, lavishly, and cheaply provide them some entree into the region.

28. Soviet influence is still hampered mainly by two factors: Soviet military power lacks a credible capability to intervene on behalf of Arab allies massively and rapidly enough in most Arab-Israeli conflict scenarios to contain Israeli military power. And lack of any relations or bargaining leverage with Israel makes it impossible for the Soviets to get by diplomatic means what potential Arab clients most need, Israeli concessions. These factors, along with traditional Islamic distaste for Communism and a growing awareness of Soviet "neo-imperialist" behavior in dealings with clients, still leave the USSR distinctly inferior to the United States as an effective superpower in the Middle East, notwithstanding the region's proximity and the United States' loss of its Iranian ally. The very importance of the region to the West obliges the USSR to consider carefully possible Western reactions to any of its moves.

### The Mediterranean Region

29. *Syria*. Syria is currently the Soviet Union's principal ally in the Middle East and its key to influence in the region, but the relationship is one in which the two countries are heavily dependent on each other. The Soviets, particularly in the past two

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years, have supplied to Syria an extensive array of conventional weapons and a modern air defense system. The Soviet Union is the only country willing and able to provide the arms Syria feels it needs. Over 5,500 Soviet troops man the SA-5 missile sites, operate the advanced early warning and command and control systems, train and assist in the operation of the SA-2, SA-3, and SA-6 missile sites, advise combat units, and instruct pilots. Syria, for its own reasons, is pursuing some policies pleasing to the Soviets, such as blocking US peace initiatives, aiding anti-American groups in Lebanon, and providing access to the ships of the Soviet Mediterranean Squadron and to Soviet naval reconnaissance aircraft. But the Syrians persist in some policies that are counter to Soviet aims, such as collaboration with Iran against Iraq, the ouster of Yasir Arafat from Lebanon and the backing of Arafat's rivals in the Palestine Liberation Organization, and pursuit of an independent policy in Lebanon. The inherent instability of Syrian politics also gives rise to Soviet concern about the future of the Soviet-Syrian relationship.

30. Moscow almost certainly believes that the departure of US forces from Lebanon in 1984 was a major victory and a vindication of the risks it took in playing an active role in Syria's air defense after the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982. The Soviets will try to press their advantage by isolating the United States further from moderate Arab countries. But the Soviet gains are limited. Indeed, the departure of US forces, if coupled with a decreased Israeli threat, may lead to a reduced Soviet presence in Syria, rather than an increase in access to naval and air facilities.

31. Despite all of this, the Syrians and Soviets need each other and will continue to collaborate on most issues. Soviet officials have told American academics that they would have no choice but to support Damascus in a crisis. Moscow would be likely to take a number of steps to bolster the Syrians if their positions in Lebanon came under intense military pressure from Israel or the United States.

32. *Egypt.* Egypt is a major Soviet target. Although the inability to reestablish close ties with the Egyptians has been a disappointment to the Kremlin, Moscow is working hard to improve relations. High-level Soviet visitors to Cairo and the resumption of ambassadorial representation attest to the keen Soviet interest. There is, however, little that the Soviets can offer to Egypt to offset the benefits of the Camp David agreements and

their aftermath. Many Egyptian officials remember the frictions associated with the massive Soviet presence in Egypt from 1968 to 1972. Egypt is likely to remain an elusive target of Soviet Middle East policy.

33. *Libya.* The Soviets and Libyans have developed a complementary relationship based on a shared hostility toward Western, particularly US, influence and strengthened by the supply of modern Soviet weaponry to Libya. Libya is one of the USSR's principal sources of hard currency as the result of arms sales surpassing \$15 billion since the 1970s. Although the long-term objectives of the USSR and Libya differ in many ways, Moscow considers Libya's promotion of radical factions in Africa to be furthering its own goal of undermining regimes and groups supportive of the West. Moreover, the pace of military cooperation picked up when Qadhafi in 1981 began allowing Soviet warships and naval aircraft to make periodic visits to Libya. The Soviets' public support for Libyan policies has increased along with their improved access, and as US-Soviet relations have deteriorated. Last spring, for example, the Soviet media adopted a pro-Libyan line during the siege at the Libyan People's Bureau in London.

34. The Soviets have generally regarded Qadhafi's machinations against the pro-Western regimes of Sudan and Somalia and his support of revolutionary movements in the Middle East and Central America as consistent with their own foreign policy objectives. On the other hand, Moscow recognizes that many Third World countries oppose Qadhafi's expansionist ambitions and that Qadhafi is a mercurial, unpredictable leader, not amenable to advice from the Kremlin. Consequently, Moscow tries to take advantage of Libya's adventurism, while avoiding close public identification with the Libyan regime and acknowledging no responsibility for its actions.

35. *Jordan.* For the next year or two, the Soviets will probably concentrate on Jordan, hoping to wean King Hussein away from close military and political alignment with the United States and toward at least a more nonaligned position. By offering arms on favorable terms, the Soviets are pursuing their classic approach to a prospective client. Hussein, who has become increasingly miffed at his role as a secondary US ally, and at what he sees as Washington's lack of appreciation for his role in the Palestinian situation, has pursued closer relations with Moscow both for what he can get out of it, and to make the United States pay more serious attention to Jordanian sensitiv-

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ities and requirements. Under Hussein, Jordan is not likely to come under Soviet influence. To a considerable extent, Moscow's success in its Jordanian policy will depend more upon Jordanian perceptions of the US Middle East policy than upon anything that the Soviets offer to Amman.

#### Southwest Asia

36. *Iran-Iraq War.* The Iran-Iraq war has been more a challenge to the Soviets than an opportunity. Ideally, the Soviets would like to be the close ally of both states, and in practice have tried hard not to antagonize either belligerent. Although the USSR would prefer the war to end, it has benefited from the reduction of oil exports from the belligerents and the resulting maintenance of a fairly stable world oil price. The USSR has also realized a significant gain in hard currency from arms sales: from 1979 through 1983 the Soviets exported almost \$8 billion worth of arms to the belligerents (\$7.07 billion to Iraq and \$0.8 billion to Iran), which was more than 30 percent of all Soviet arms sales to the Third World in this period.

37. The Soviets are now trying to exploit fears of escalation to improve their contacts with the moderate Arab states such as Kuwait and Jordan. From Moscow's point of view the least favorable outcome of the Iran-Iraq conflict would be a clear-cut victory by either side, which could mean the emergence of a Persian Gulf power less susceptible to Soviet influence. The Soviets would respond to a renewed Iranian offensive by increasing the flow of arms to Iraq. Despite its latent difficulties with the current regime in Baghdad, the USSR would not want to see a fundamentalist Shia government in Iraq, of the type that the Iranians would prefer. The Soviets also have mixed feelings about the effects of a possible Iranian victory on the conservative Arab Gulf states. The USSR would welcome a weakening of the monarchies in these states, but recognizes that the immediate effect of Iranian expansionism would be to push the Gulf states much closer to the United States. The alternative prospect of fundamentalist Islamic regimes in the Gulf states is also unappealing to Moscow. To avoid outcomes of this sort, the USSR would favor a negotiated settlement of the Gulf war, and ideally would like to be the mediator.

38. *Iraq.* Long before the Gulf war broke out, the USSR became the main supplier of arms to Iraq, and was repaid in hard currency. Iraq's hostility to Israel and the United States and its isolation from other Arab

states helped establish a reasonably close working relationship between Baghdad and Moscow. Iraq's radical political stance and its status in nonaligned circles were also useful to Soviet Third World aims. But, from the start there were frictions:

- The Iraqis consistently refused to allow the Soviets military access.
- They put severe limits on the number of Soviets permitted in Iraq.
- The periodic purges of local Communists added an element of distrust.

In the early stages of the Gulf war, the Soviets embargoed arms supplies to Baghdad in the hope of gaining influence in Iran. As Tehran repeatedly rebuffed Soviet overtures, however, Moscow became increasingly disenchanted with Iran. The USSR resumed arms shipments to Iraq in 1981, and negotiated additional arms agreements the following year when Iranian offensives resulted in the occupation of small portions of Iraqi territory. Despite the ups and downs of the relationship, the mutual interests of Iraq and the USSR are sufficient to sustain the flow of arms and the Soviets will make great efforts to prevent an Iraqi defeat.

39. *Iran.* The big prize in the Gulf area is Iran. But gaining influence in Tehran has proved to be elusive for the Soviets. The Iranians have recently made some gestures toward improving relations with the USSR, primarily in order to induce the Soviets to reduce arms sales to Iraq. Moscow draws scant satisfaction from the bitterly anti-American stance of the Iran regime, because the Soviets are clearly cast as the second most hated outsiders. The USSR puts up with the anti-Communist, anti-Soviet thrust of Iranian policy in hopes that the aging Khomeini will soon leave the scene, and that the successors will take more kindly to the Soviet friendship offers and to the Communist Tudeh party. At the same time, Iran has been obtaining Soviet-style arms from North Korea and Libya, and some directly from the USSR. This creates a degree of Iranian dependence on Soviet weapons that the Soviets may hope to exploit in the future, especially since the primary recipient of Soviet-style arms has been the Revolutionary Guard, the main internal security force.

40. It is clear that the Soviets will make a major effort to gain influence with a successor regime. If, despite Soviet blandishments, the successor government in Tehran takes an anti-Soviet stance, the USSR

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will probably resort to subversive efforts, such as support of Iranian minorities against the central government or the stimulation of internal disorder in Iran in order to bring pressure on the regime. If internal order did fragment in Iran, with or without Soviet stimulation, the Soviets would try to promote the establishment of a regime more attuned to Soviet interests. The worst outcome for the Soviets would be a return of massive US and Western involvement in Iran, which the USSR would go to some lengths to prevent.

41. **Kuwait.** Kuwait is the only Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) state that has relations with the USSR. Kuwait's nervousness over developments in the Gulf war, its desire for new arms, and its unhappiness with the US reaction to its arms requests provide opportunities for Soviet arms sales. The original Soviet-Kuwaiti arms deal for \$258 million in 1982 was supplemented by an additional deal in the summer of 1984 for an unknown amount. Soviet military technicians have gone to Kuwait in the past, but only on a temporary basis, and the Kuwaitis are likely to continue to resist the permanent stationing of Soviet military personnel in their country. Most Kuwaiti military equipment is of Western origin, and the Soviet share of the arsenal will remain small. Moreover, the Kuwaitis now earn more from their investments in the West than they do from the export of oil. The Soviets have no similar attractions to offer. In sum, although a fundamental reorientation of Kuwaiti politics is unlikely, the Soviets hope that increased contacts with Kuwait will also give them better entree to the other members of the GCC.

42. **The Arabian Peninsula.** The USSR has made a substantial military and political investment in South Yemen and maintains a large military aid program in North Yemen, including some 500 Soviet advisers and technicians. The Soviets will continue to cultivate both the pro-Soviet regime in South Yemen and the more nonaligned ruler of North Yemen. They may hope that their strong presence in the Yemens will induce Riyadh to open diplomatic relations with them. Moscow may also hope to use its dialogue with Jordan or Kuwait to gain entree to Saudi Arabia, Oman, and the United Arab Emirates. The Soviets do not expect to gain much influence in Saudi Arabia in the next few years but would like at least to establish diplomatic relations and present themselves as an alternate great-power supporter for the Saudis.

## South Asia

43. Although South Asia does not enjoy the same status in Soviet eyes as the Middle East and Southwest Asia region, the Soviets have a capability to bring military force to bear in this area close to their own territory. Yet, the Soviets' large-scale employment of armed forces in Afghanistan has put the USSR on the defensive in several respects and now shapes its interests, priorities, and options throughout the region. The principal Soviet goals in South Asia in the later 1980s will be:

- To preserve the pro-Soviet regime in Afghanistan.
- To apply pressure to Pakistan to stop funneling aid to the Afghan rebels.
- To preserve and strengthen ties with India.

44. **Afghanistan.** The USSR has made scant progress in five years of combating Afghan insurgents. The political base of the Soviet-installed Afghan Government is still narrow, the Afghan Army's capabilities are not improving, and the resistance is as strong as ever. Yet, the Soviets have no intention of withdrawing, not the least because it would be an admission of failure. Over the longer haul, the Soviets expect to prevail over the rebels by outlasting them and wearing them down. Thus, their most likely policy will be to persevere, keep up the military pressure on the guerrillas, wear down the proresistance support of the countryside through reprisals, isolate the urban populace through enhanced internal security, tinker with the internal Afghan leadership to make it more effective, and try to gain international acceptance of their client regime. Over the long run, the USSR expects to educate a new generation of Afghans to accept Soviet tutelage.

45. **Pakistan.** The Soviets believe that Pakistani support for the Afghan insurgents has been a major cause of their own problems in Afghanistan, and will try a variety of approaches to Pakistan in the next few years in order to reduce that support. The Soviets are willing to use offers of economic aid in an attempt to induce the Pakistanis to reduce support of the Afghan insurgency. At the same time, the Soviets are increasing political and military pressure on President Zia to coerce him into ending help to the insurgents. Moscow is sponsoring and aiding a variety of dissident Pakistani groups and could supplement this with direct military pressure on the border from Soviet or Afghan

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units against refugee camps in Pakistan. The Soviets will continue to exploit Indo-Pakistani tensions to put pressure on Pakistan. Getting rid of Zia, or forcing Zia to abandon aid to the Afghan rebels is a major aim of Soviet policy in South Asia, and would have the additional benefits of depriving the United States and China of their principal supporter in South Asia.

46. **India.** Soviet relations with India have been a main facet of Moscow's Third World policy for some 30 years. From the point of view of Moscow, India is important because of its size, strategic location, regional dominance, leadership in the Nonaligned Movement, and its role in the containment of China. The war in Afghanistan has increased Soviet interest in India, and Soviet efforts to secure Indian help in muting international criticism of the Afghan intervention and in putting pressure on Pakistan. India finds the close relationship with the USSR attractive because it gets modern weapons relatively cheaply, and is the only Third World country to get Soviet technology for the production of advanced Soviet-style weapons. It can settle trade accounts with the USSR by rupee payments, and the close relationship with the USSR is a deterrent against China.

47. The Soviets are aware, however, that the Indians cannot be taken for granted and that the alliance requires constant cultivation and nurturing. The USSR is not likely to gain military access rights in India. The Indians view with apprehension Soviet long-term goals in the region. They are nervous about the changed regional balance in South Asia caused by the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan, and are uneasy over the increased US aid to Pakistan, brought on in part by the Soviet Afghan policy. The Indians, in their relations with Pakistan, will take Soviet attitudes into consideration but are unlikely to make them the determinant of their foreign policy. Overall, the Soviets and the Gandhi government are satisfied with the current state of the relationship and neither is likely to attempt any major alteration.

### Southeast Asia

48. Southeast Asia is important to Moscow, principally because of its potential for containing China, but also for improving the Soviet naval posture in the region and for its access to the Indian Ocean.

49. **Vietnam.** The USSR's posture in Southeast Asia hinges on its relationship with Vietnam. Hanoi has by far the largest armed force in the region and has developed extensive economic and military ties with Moscow. Since 1978 these ties have been formalized in

a friendship treaty and in Vietnam's membership in CEMA. Vietnam depends heavily on Soviet aid to maintain the lengthy conflict in Kampuchea and to sustain its crippled and mismanaged economy. The Soviet investment in Vietnam provides:

- Maintenance of a militarily strong anti-Chinese state on China's south flank, a possible second front in any Sino-Soviet conflict.
- Potential leverage in Southeast Asian regional affairs.
- A military presence, with access to important facilities, along the main sea route between the Pacific and Indian Oceans, and the oil tanker route from the Persian Gulf to Japan.

50. There are some persistent frictions and misunderstandings in the Vietnam-USSR relationship:

- Hanoi is unhappy over what it considers Soviet stinginess in aid.
- The Soviets accuse the Vietnamese of squandering aid in mismanaged projects.
- The Vietnamese continue to worry about Sino-Soviet talks, and possible deals at the expense of Vietnam.
- Although the Soviets generally support Vietnam in its Kampuchean adventure, this issue complicates Moscow's relations with other states in the region.

Nonetheless, the alliance is likely to prevail for many years, because each side provides the other with irreplaceable assets: the Soviets give significant aid and military backing against the Chinese threat, and in return get access to air and naval bases and intelligence and communications facilities.

51. **ASEAN.**<sup>3</sup> The Soviet alliance with Vietnam adversely affects Moscow's chances for improved relations with the ASEAN countries. All ASEAN states are staunchly anti-Communist and are alert to the dangers of Soviet penetration. The only opportunity for Soviet penetration in these countries would come from a major internal political upheaval in an ASEAN state. Perhaps the most critical situation looming in the ASEAN world is the political uncertainty of the Marcos regime in the Philippines. But the USSR is not supporting either the Muslim insurgents on Mindanao

<sup>3</sup> The ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) countries are Thailand, Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia, the Philippines, and Brunei.

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or opposition groups in Manila and seems to have very few assets to bring about a revolutionary change in the Philippines. Although it appears unlikely that political events in the capital would jeopardize the US bases, Moscow would certainly give high priority to attempts to influence a post-Marcos regime and would support any faction that promised to close the US bases.

### Latin America

52. The principal value of Soviet influence in Latin America, from Moscow's viewpoint, is to serve as a means to distract and consume resources of the United States—political, economic, and military—that might otherwise be brought to bear on higher priority Soviet interests. Central America is particularly useful to the Soviets in this context. Soviet advances there are especially embarrassing to the United States, and have the potential for causing dissension in US public opinion and disagreements among the NATO allies. An additional value to the USSR, if its outposts of political influence can be maintained, is to help project to the world an image of expanding Soviet power on the international stage.

53. *Cuba*. Cuba will remain the USSR's single most important client in the Third World. It is the hub of Soviet access to the Caribbean area, and its principal value to the Soviets is its proximity to the United States. Cuba is ideally located for both Soviet intelligence collection activities and for the threat it poses to US economic and military interests in the area, and as an entree for further Soviet involvement. Cuba is also prized as the premier Soviet ally in military and technical penetration of the Third World. At the same time, however, Cuba's proximity to the United States makes it extremely vulnerable. The Soviets reassure Castro of their support, but do not want to be publicly committed to the defense of Castro. For his part, Castro wants Soviet support but does not want to be seen as an outpost of the Warsaw Pact and thus a logical first target in a larger East-West confrontation.

54. Soviet military assistance to Cuba has averaged about \$500 million a year since 1977. Since 1978 the Soviets have delivered to Cuba over 150 jet aircraft, an air defense command and control system, three diesel attack submarines, two frigates, two landing ships, four modern land-based antisubmarine warfare (ASW) helicopters, 11 missile attack boats, nine Turya-class hydrofoil torpedo boats, and a wide variety of other types of weapons. Meanwhile, Cuban air and sealift

capabilities have increased greatly to the point where, if unopposed, Castro could unilaterally move and logistically support some 10,000 troops in Central America. The Soviet military presence and scope of activities in Cuba have also steadily grown. A Soviet signals intercept facility at Lourdes is the largest and most important such facility outside the Soviet Union. Soviet naval air deployments to Cuba are increasing, and the Soviets now have access to an airfield where they could support up to eight Bear aircraft. Some 7,000 to 9,000 Soviet military personnel are stationed in Cuba, including the Soviet brigade of 3,000. This brigade provides local security for Soviet installations, protection for Castro against possible local opponents, and may be intended as a deterrent to a US invasion. Moreover, the Soviets have further options including deploying more naval craft to the region and deploying permanently ASW aircraft or ASW naval craft in Cuba. Such moves would force the United States to devote more attention to watching the Soviets there, and would complicate US regional strategic planning.

55. *Nicaragua*. Besides Cuba, the USSR values the success and survival of the radical regime in Nicaragua. But clearly the Soviet interest there is of a lower order. The Soviets are now delivering oil to Nicaragua and are assuming some other economic costs, but are not willing to give a security guarantee. Concern over US reactions is probably the chief reason Moscow has kept its direct military role in Nicaragua small. The Grenada operation in 1983 illustrated to the Soviets the danger of their playing too overt a role in the hemisphere. A conspicuous Soviet presence in Nicaragua would also alienate Mexico, Panama, and other countries that are uneasy over the growth of Nicaraguan military power. By operating largely through Cuba and other intermediaries, such as Bulgaria, the Soviets have avoided irretrievable commitments to the preservation of the Sandinista regime. If the Sandinistas consolidate their power and appear to become more secure from both internal opposition and possible outside intervention, the Soviets might move more openly to strengthen their position in Nicaragua.

56. *El Salvador*. Moscow is probably now taking a long-term view of the armed struggle in El Salvador. Whereas the insurgency appeared close to success a couple of years ago, the failure of the guerrillas and the political and military aid response of Washington have probably dimmed Soviet hopes of an early success. But, even if a quick triumph is now unlikely,

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the Soviets will continue to support and encourage Western Hemisphere insurgencies to keep the United States embroiled in controversial conflicts in countries close to its borders.

57. *Peru.* Peru is the only major customer for Soviet arms in South America, and the only one where Soviet military advisers are accepted. The USSR has shipped over \$1.5 billion of military goods to Peru and is supplying about 150 military advisers. The Soviets have maintained their distance from the Maoist "Sendero Luminoso" insurgents. Although key members of the Peruvian political elite, including the President, would like to reduce Peru's arms dependence upon the Soviets, they are hampered by the difficulty and high cost of obtaining Western arms, particularly in light of Moscow's continued attractive financing terms.

58. Elsewhere in the Western Hemisphere, the Soviets are interested in maintaining good, if not close, relations with Mexico, Argentina, Brazil, and Colombia. They see little chance of political upheaval that would bring a pro-Soviet regime into office in any of these countries, but growing trade relations with Argentina, and clandestine operations in Colombia and Mexico offer long-range opportunities to build influence. The Soviets may also try to exploit, in conjunction with the Cubans, new opportunities for influence in politically unstable and coup-prone Bolivia.

## Africa

59. The USSR's interest in Sub-Saharan Africa is somewhat different from its interest in regions described above. Sub-Saharan Africa is of less immediate value to the USSR, but does provide some payoffs: a source of commodities the Soviets must import; influence with regional states at the expense of the West and China, thereby enhancing Soviet prestige as a superpower; and, especially, access to naval and air facilities. Soviet incursions in Africa do not encounter the intensity of US resentment that penetration of Latin America would stimulate.

60. By taking advantage of the breakup of the Portuguese empire and the fall of the Ethiopian monarchy in the mid-1970s, the Soviets established influential positions in Ethiopia, Angola, and Mozambique. Cuban combat forces have been of critical importance in establishing and maintaining pro-Soviet regimes in Angola and Ethiopia. But all of these regimes are beset by major insurgencies, and the costs to the Soviets are rising. Furthermore, the history of Soviet involvement in Africa is a reminder to the Kremlin of the impermanence of influence-building

efforts on the dark continent. The earlier failures in Ghana, Mali, Zaire, Sudan, and Somalia have not been forgotten, and current Soviet programs in Africa stress the building of institutional and party connections rather than the sponsorship of individual political figures, who are subject to overthrow (Ghana's Nkrumah or Mali's Keita) or change of allegiance (Somalia's Siad Barre). Also, the Soviets are leery of investing their own scarce resources in an impoverished continent. Soviet stinginess in economic aid is well known in Africa, but the insecurity of some African leaders is so great, and the lure of cheap Soviet weapons and training so strong, that there will be ample opportunities for further Soviet incursions in other African states. Moreover, the liberation struggles in Namibia and South Africa will give the Soviets continued opportunities in the region.

61. *Southern Africa.* In southern Africa, the Soviet achievements are mixed. Moscow has established a considerable degree of influence over the Government of Angola, and to a lesser degree over that of Mozambique. It has acquired air and naval facilities in Angola. But the Soviet economic and counterinsurgency aid has been insufficient to maintain internal stability in either country. In Angola over 30,000 Cuban forces have not stemmed the insurgent offensives. As a result, Angola recently reached agreement with South Africa, the principal regional power, by which the South Africans agreed to withdraw from southern Angola in exchange for an Angolan pledge to prevent SWAPO (South-West Africa People's Organization) insurgents from operating in Namibia. Mozambique also continues to be beset by an active insurgency, and it too has come to terms with South Africa, in the hope of reducing South African backing of that insurgency and of gaining Western economic aid. The Soviets were excluded from the negotiations that resulted in these agreements.

62. The Soviets, however, show no signs of withdrawing from the area and are encouraging local rulers to maintain their Soviet-style state structures. They may also believe that the South Africans will prove to be so duplicitous that the agreements between their clients and the South Africans will fall apart, or that the infusion of economic aid from South Africa and the West will keep Angola and Mozambique afloat while the Soviets strengthen their political and military ties with these two countries. Soviet deliveries of major weapons to Angola and Mozambique have continued unabated thus far in 1984. Still, the progress of the insurgency in Angola is a continuing cause for concern. The recent accords have complicated Mos-

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cow's efforts to support SWAPO and the ANC (African National Congress). The Soviets have already lost some influence in Mozambique, and in Angola they face the prospect of either having to increase their commitment significantly or seeing the Angolan Government come to terms with the insurgents. Such a development could lead to Soviet-Cuban frictions over policy in Angola, and could result in a serious Soviet setback.

63. **Ethiopia.** The Soviets probably expect that their investment in Ethiopia will turn out better. Chairman Mengistu is totally dependent upon massive Soviet arms deliveries to sustain his counterinsurgency campaigns in the northern provinces, and has proceeded with the establishment of a Leninist-style party in Ethiopia. Despite Mengistu's predilection for Marxism-Leninism and his need for the USSR, there is a tenuous quality to the Soviet-Ethiopian relationship. Ethiopian military leaders do not care for the Soviet military advisers, nor do they value the advice offered. The Soviets are generally pleased with Mengistu's establishment of the party in September 1984, but new tensions are likely to arise concerning its structure and its responsiveness to Soviet guidance. A military coup by the Army leadership, unhappy with the Soviet presence and the setbacks in the counterinsurgency campaigns, could undo nearly 10 years of Soviet effort in Ethiopia. This would be a substantial setback for the USSR, which has put a great deal of effort into the political indoctrination of party cadres and gains militarily from the use of air and naval facilities in Ethiopia. Soviet planes use Asmara Airfield for ASW and reconnaissance missions over the Indian Ocean, and the USSR has built an austere naval repair and replenishment facility on the Dahlak Archipelago in the Red Sea. The Dahlak facility supports the Soviet Indian Ocean squadron, and is strategically situated—both in terms of Soviet sea routes from the European USSR to ports in the Soviet Far East, and as a partial counter to US use of facilities in nearby Somalia, Kenya, and Sudan.

64. **West Africa.** The main motivation for an increase in Soviet activities in the area would be the possibility of establishing air and/or naval facilities for reconnaissance and ASW operations in the mid-Atlantic area and for air transport from the USSR and Cuba to southern African countries. At present the Soviets have limited air and port access in Guinea and enjoy port-call privileges in other West African states. Although the Soviets have had thus far moderate success in developing closer relations with the leftist regimes of Ghana, Benin, Burkina (formerly Upper Volta), and

Guinea-Bissau, they have been unable to persuade the Guinean Government to restore access of their naval reconnaissance aircraft to Conakry Airfield, and they are still probing for such privileges elsewhere along the West African coast. The abysmal poverty and inherent political instability of most of the West African states may make any one of them a "soft" target of future Soviet efforts to gain regional military access. Although the Soviets may receive permission to use more African airfields for Military Transport Aviation (VTA) flights, they are unlikely to fly reconnaissance aircraft to any of these countries.

65. **Zaire.** Elsewhere in black Africa, the Soviets would probably like to take advantage of any popular discontent resulting from the IMF-imposed economic reforms. Zaire is one of the major debtor states in Africa. Efforts by the Soviets in the early 1960s to establish influence in Zaire failed, and their support for dissident Zairian factions in most recent years has also accomplished little. The dissident groups now encamped across the border in Angola have deteriorated, and currently are incapable of mounting another invasion of Zaire. (With outside aid, however, they could conduct sabotage operations throughout the country, including the mineral-rich province of Shaba.) So long as President Mobutu is in charge in Kinshasa, there is virtually no chance for increased Soviet influence in Zaire, and, even if political turmoil were to follow Mobutu's demise, Soviet assets would be insufficient to take advantage of the situation, particularly if those Western countries with investments there used their own assets to preserve Western influence.

66. The Soviets are also likely to continue to probe for access rights in small islands in the eastern Atlantic and the Indian Ocean, and eventually in the Pacific. They probably still see advantages in establishing political and military influence in places like Cape Verde, Madagascar, Seychelles, and Mauritius. Their best prospects seem to be in Seychelles.

#### SOVIET MILITARY CAPABILITIES AND THE SOVIET POSITION IN THE THIRD WORLD

67. There is a clear interaction between Soviet military capabilities and Soviet military access to Third World countries. On the one hand, the growth of Soviet military power, together with the ability to deliver more sophisticated weapon systems, makes the Soviet Union appear as a more attractive partner and thus makes Soviet entree into some Third World states easier. On the other hand, the USSR's growing military power, presence in the Third World enhances its

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military power, while some of the money earned from arms power, while some of the money earned from arms sales can be used to finance other Third World adventures, or to help sustain the high level of Soviet arms production. But there is no automatic dynamic between Soviet military power and Third World access.

### The Delivery of Sophisticated Weaponry to Certain Third World States

68. The USSR's Third World strategy will almost certainly involve the exploitation of its most potent export—armaments. It could supply to certain Third World states more sophisticated weapons that have a potential to alter, but not necessarily upset, regional balances of power to its benefit and to the disadvantage of the United States and its friends in the Third World. It should be noted that the Soviets have consistently refused to supply to any Third World state the equipment, material, or technology for nuclear weapons. We have no reason to believe that this policy will change in the time frame of this Estimate. Nevertheless, the trend in Soviet weapons deliveries is to provide more modern and sophisticated equipment. (In part, this is driven by the demand of Third World states for more modern arms.) By delivering advanced types of arms to selective Third World recipients, the Soviet Union could aggravate regional tensions, thereby diverting US attention from other areas where Soviet interests are more sensitive, and forcing the United States to respond to new crises. Among the Soviet options are:

- Introducing new generations of conventionally armed short-range ballistic missile systems (SS-21s) into the inventories of Iraq and Libya, as the Soviets have for Syria.
- Supplying North Korea and Vietnam with MIG-23 fighter aircraft, thereby reversing the previous Soviet reluctance to send such sophisticated weapons to these countries. Such deliveries, if the quantities were large enough, would affect the military balance of power on the Korean Peninsula and Southeast Asia. Friends of the United States—South Korea and Thailand—would seek reassurance and matching support from Washington.
- Delivering or facilitating the delivery of jet combat aircraft to Nicaragua. This would be a direct challenge to the United States, in view of previous US warnings at a high level against such actions.

69. Soviet arms deliveries to Cuba over the next year or two will be strongly influenced by the need to show support for Cuba in the wake of the Grenada setback and by the belief that the United States is not likely to tolerate aggressive Soviet actions in the area. Soviet gestures of support for Cuba might include:

- Introducing MIG-25 high-altitude interceptors into Cuban inventories, or significantly expanding the Soviet brigade on the island, or both. These measures would reflect Moscow's solidarity with Castro and send a signal to Washington that the USSR does not intend to back away from an active presence in the Caribbean, despite Grenada.
- Delivering an SA-5 long-range, high-altitude missile system, which would considerably extend the range of Cuban air defenses, and indicate a continued assertive Soviet policy in the Caribbean.

The loss of Grenada will not dissuade the USSR from continuing to probe for opportunities in the Western Hemisphere, but the Soviets will more carefully weigh possible US responses.

70. In the Third World, Soviet arms exports have an advantage over the West because of the USSR's voluminous stocks of weapons, rapid delivery, and favorable pricing and financing arrangements. Soviet disadvantages are also likely to persist: client preference for Western equipment, especially where advanced electronics (for example, avionics) are involved, and client distaste for the political intrusions and obligations that come with Soviet arms. Also, the poor Soviet record on maintenance and spare parts deliveries is well known.

### Political and Military Use of the USSR's Expanding Military Power

71. The Soviet Union is likely to try to make the maximum political use of its expanding military power. The Soviets now have a military presence in virtually every region of the world, with the most important support facilities in Cuba, Vietnam, Ethiopia, South Yemen, and Angola. Soviet SIGINT sites have been established in three countries and Soviet military communications facilities are located in six countries. Reconnaissance and long-range strike aircraft and naval units operating from distant bases would afford the Soviets important intelligence and limited ASW, anti-CVBG (against carrier battle groups), and anti-SLOC (against sea lines of communications) capabilities in time of crisis or limited hostilities.

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72. But Soviet military capabilities in distant areas of the Third World are constrained by certain limitations and deficiencies of equipment, organization, and force structure. For instance, the USSR still would not be able to prosecute successfully a distant operation akin to the British reconquest of the Falklands, primarily because of limited ASW capabilities, the lack of aircraft carriers, lack of aerial refueling capabilities for tactical and airlift aircraft, and insufficient amphibious capability. Also, the capability of Soviet airlift and the new fighters and bombers to reach many Third World countries in a crisis remains dependent on securing overflight privileges or staging rights. Moreover, the USSR's logistic capability is still limited. The USSR also lacks depots, pre-positioned equipment (except in Vietnam), and fuel storage facilities for deployment in distant areas. These deficiencies are likely to inhibit major Soviet military advances into distant areas of the Third World within the time frame of this Estimate.

73. The extensive Soviet military aid programs in the Third World offer opportunities to develop personal and institutional relationships with the military establishments of Third World states and to seek acceptance of Soviet installations. Soviet entreaties to that end have worked best when a regime feels threatened either by invasion (such as Cuba or Ethiopia) or by strong internal opposition (such as Angola or Guinea). In some cases military aid provided the entree that Moscow needed eventually to gain some access to naval and air facilities (such as in South Yemen and Libya). But India, for instance, has steadfastly refused to give the Soviets access to facilities despite receiving some \$6.3 billion in military deliveries over the last 20 years. Iraq also refuses, despite relying on Soviet military deliveries for its survival in its war with Iran. Thus, military aid does not automatically translate into access to military facilities.

74. The Soviets have sometimes taken direct military action to back allies in the Third World. Soviet air defense forces have been deployed to a few countries, and they engaged in combat with Israeli aircraft over Egypt in 1970. To back up Soviet diplomacy, Soviet naval units deploy to the South Atlantic, the Mediterranean, the Indian Ocean, and the South China Sea, and the Soviets regularly deploy naval aircraft to six countries.

75. The Soviets are clearly aware of the limitations of their Third World military power projection capabilities as compared with those of the United States. At the same time, they are conscious that the political payoff of visible Soviet military power in the Third

World is not negated by superior military power on the part of the United States and its allies in these regions. Local political conditions, a lack of Western interest in the country, or decisions in the West to avoid a possible conflict in some instances may leave the USSR the effective extraregional power in some Third World encounters.

76. The nature of the Soviet military presence in the Third World is changing in several important ways. The deployment of Soviet naval aircraft is sharply up since 1979, and is again at the level reached in the early 1970s when Egypt was a Soviet ally. Reconnaissance and ASW planes regularly use airfields in Cuba, Vietnam, South Yemen, Ethiopia, and Angola, and occasionally in Syria and Libya. In addition, the Soviets maintain a few strike aircraft in Vietnam. The support facilities in these countries are kept at an austere level, in part because the Soviets lack confidence in the permanence of their relationships with the host countries. These arrangements are sufficient, however, for the Soviets to expand their ASW/reconnaissance flights to the Caribbean, the Indian Ocean, the South China Sea, and perhaps the South Atlantic—areas that could not be covered except from foreign bases. Soviet use of Third World facilities is naturally dependent on the continued approval of the host country. Each of these countries has to calculate the benefits, costs, and risks of supporting the Soviets and, in a time of crisis, most would not want to be drawn into an East-West confrontation. Moscow seems to recognize these vulnerabilities in its policy of not becoming overly dependent on any overseas facility.

77. The Soviets are working to improve their capabilities for military action in distant areas. They are developing an increasingly sophisticated global command and control network. The USSR has an expanding long-range airlift capability and is gaining experience with frequent flights to distant areas. The IL-76 AWACS (airborne warning and control system) aircraft will soon be operational and could be sent to crisis areas to bolster local air defenses and demonstrate Soviet concern. Also, secure, reliable, and redundant global communications based on satellite systems are increasingly available to Soviet units and military advisory groups. The Soviets, moreover, are developing fighter planes configured for air-to-air refueling, and are in the process of constructing a carrier for conventional takeoff and landing aircraft. These systems now being developed will not begin to come into the inventory until the early 1990s.

78. The increased Soviet presence in the Third World and the new systems being developed are

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gradually widening the Soviets' range of options in distant areas and enhancing their ability to come to the aid of beleaguered pro-Soviet regimes. The Soviets may also be able to exploit the footholds they now have to promote or support subversion and insurgencies in neighboring territories. But, through 1995 the Soviets will still not have the military capabilities in areas distant from the periphery of the USSR to pose any direct challenge to the United States or major regional powers such as South Africa or Israel, which will themselves be enhancing their own military capabilities.

### CONSTRAINTS AND VULNERABILITIES OF SOVIET POLICY IN THE THIRD WORLD

79. Over the past few years the momentum of Soviet advance has slowed, and the previous advances have created new problems for the USSR. It now has major investments to defend and is finding the burdens and costs of the empire to be heavy and increasing.

#### US Activism and Soviet Response

80. One of the major reasons for the slowing of Soviet momentum in the Third World has been the more vigorous and assertive US foreign policy. Among the indications of the evolving thrust of US Third World policy are US actions in support of Central American governments threatened by leftist guerrillas, the military operation in Grenada, joint exercises with Egypt, [redacted] diplomatic support of southern African disengagement, the acquisition of access facilities and prepositioning rights for CENTCOM in the Red Sea/Arabian Peninsula area, and the continued deployment of strong naval task forces to the Mediterranean, the Pacific, and the Indian Ocean.

81. Also, some of the West European allies have taken more forceful positions on particular Third World issues. The determination of the United Kingdom to defend its interests in the Falklands and the dispatch of French forces to Chad indicate that the European allies can project limited military power to protect their own interests in the Third World if they choose to do so. But the NATO Allies are less supportive of US policy in Central America and clearly do not share the US sense of global responsibility for containing Soviet expansion.

82. The Soviets have steadfastly rejected the US notion that they should proscribe their activities in the Third World for the sake of better US-Soviet relations.

Further, in view of the history of the past 10 years, Moscow has come to expect that any US retaliatory measures in such areas as trade or arms control will be subject to conflicting political and economic pressures from Allies and domestic interest groups and will therefore be short lived. The European displeasure over the American operation in Grenada and the sharp disagreements between the United States and France over the timing and nature of a response to the Libyan invasion of Chad were undoubtedly welcomed by Moscow. But the Soviets also realize that their aggressive actions have carried some costs and have affected the overall approach of the West toward the Soviet Union. In making decisions about future actions, therefore, they are likely to weigh potential regional gains and risks as well as possible effects on their overall posture vis-a-vis the West. In no case, however, do we expect the threat of political or economic sanctions to prevent Soviet exploitation of a major opportunity to penetrate a key area such as Iran or the Arabian Peninsula.

83. The Soviets, however, may not be convinced of the permanence of the renewed Western resolve. The operation in Lebanon was short lived. Domestic US debate over Central American policy and the European and Latin American criticism may suggest to the Soviets an erosion of US consensus. Overall, the US success in Grenada, the deployment of US AWACS aircraft to the Middle East, increased US naval activity, and other actions have probably affected Soviet calculations, though we do not know to what extent.

#### Insurgencies in Pro-Soviet Third World States

84. A major change in the Third World scene is that the Soviets now have major investments to defend. They can no longer just prowl, looking for new opportunities to gain influence, but are involved in the defense of pro-Soviet regimes in Afghanistan, Ethiopia, Angola, Mozambique, and Nicaragua—states in which the Soviets have secured major influence since 1975. These client governments are confronting active insurgencies, the kind of guerrilla movements that used to plague only pro-Western Third World states:

- In Afghanistan, more than 100,000 Soviet troops have been combating guerrilla forces for over four years. Insurgent attacks on Soviet and Afghan Government targets are on the increase, as are insurgent-directed strikes in Kabul itself.

- In Ethiopia, the presence of some 6,000 to 7,000 Cuban combat troops (now reduced from earlier levels of over 10,000) and 1,700 Soviet military

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advisers, some of whom are in the field with Ethiopian armed forces, has had little effect on countering the persistent separatist insurgencies in the northern provinces. With Cuban help, the Ethiopians have reconquered the disputed Oga-den area in the south, but the conflict with Somalia drags on, and Somali-sponsored insurgents make sporadic raids into Ethiopian-held territory.

- In Angola, Jonas Savimbi's UNITA guerrillas control more than a third of the country, interdict the main transportation lines, and have a political and embryonic economic infrastructure in liberated areas. The 30,000 or so Cuban troops in Angola have shown no particular stomach or aptitude for counterinsurgency. And in neighboring Namibia, the SWAPO guerrillas, despite Cuban and Soviet support, have been increasingly ineffective against the South Africans. The Soviets played no part in the recent Angolan-South African disengagement arrangements, and now face the prospect of either increasing their own commitment or accepting a situation in which their influence is diminished.
- In Mozambique, guerrillas previously sustained by South Africa operate throughout the country and are playing havoc with the economy and with government control in much of the countryside. As in the Angolan case, the Soviets were not involved when Mozambique and South Africa reached agreement to cease support for guerrillas directed against each other. The agreement reflects the Mozambican recognition that the Soviets and Cubans are unwilling to provide meaningful economic and counterinsurgency aid.
- In Nicaragua, the pro-Soviet regime is beset by a variety of attacks and harassment by anti-Sandinista guerrillas.
- In Southeast Asia, Moscow's Vietnamese allies face powerful Chinese pressure, and in Kampuchea are mired in combat with various insurgent elements.

85. The variety, intensity, and persistence of the insurgents in pro-Soviet Third World states suggest that the USSR has no ready solution to the problem. The Soviets will probably have to devote even more of their energy and resources in the next few years to defending their clients against domestic challenges. If these insurgencies show signs of succeeding, the Soviets will be faced with extremely difficult choices about upping their already heavy commitments or seeing their client governments overthrown.

### Soviet Inability To Remedy Third World Economic Problems

87. The most far-reaching change in the Third World with which both the United States and the Soviets must cope is the drastic, long-term decline in the economic fortunes of most Third World countries. This development poses some formidable barriers to the Soviet search for influence opportunities. The most advanced (and most important) Third World countries are seeking new sources of investment and new access to markets. The Soviets cannot supply either investment funds on the scale required or markets for most Third World products. The generally poor performance of the USSR in providing economic aid in recent years is well known throughout the Third World. The only hope of economic recovery for most Third World states is through investment and increased exports, which can come only from the United States and its Western allies.

88. The most important avenues for North-South debate and dialogue now and in the near future are through the international financial institutions, such as the IMF, in which the Soviets play no part. As long as the Third World countries believe that it is worthwhile to remain engaged with these institutions, the Soviets will be frozen out of perhaps the most crucial set of international relations existing today. The problem for the United States and the West is to sustain the expectations of Third World countries that economic recovery can be achieved if they cooperate with the international lending agencies and look to the West for investment and export opportunities.

### Economic Constraints on Soviet Support to Client States

89. The costs to the USSR of maintaining a string of client states are rising because of the economic distress those countries are experiencing. In addition to the burden of their own defense establishment, the Soviets must contend with the economic troubles of their

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Warsaw Pact allies. The annual costs of providing economic and military support to Cuba and Vietnam are now about \$4.5 billion and \$1 billion, respectively, and the poverty-stricken Ethiopians and Angolans are seeking more aid from Moscow. This comes at a time when revenues from Soviet exports of energy will rise only marginally (from \$16 billion this year to some \$17-19 billion by 1990), and the Soviets will find it harder to gain hard currency from their arms exports.

90. Over the next decade the USSR will face a policy dilemma—how to maintain a balance between pressure to cut economic costs of subsidizing vital Third World clients and the need to keep the client regimes viable. The USSR's reluctance to extend significant economic assistance to its clients is likely to create or exacerbate strains in bilateral relations and could limit Soviet willingness or ability to exploit opportunities in the Third World. Some client states—Angola, Ethiopia, Mozambique, and South Yemen—are unhappy with Soviet stinginess on development aid and are looking elsewhere for help. Although these regimes are tied to the USSR by their urgent need for substantial military assistance and will continue to be dependent for years, Soviet reluctance to furnish meaningful economic aid might provide openings for the United States and other Western states to gain some leverage.

91. Soviet officials acknowledge, moreover, that the poor domestic economic performance of the USSR is undermining its credibility as the socialist model for the Third World. A senior official at a leading academic institute in Moscow admitted publicly last year that the dramatic overall decline in growth rates in the USSR and Eastern Europe diminishes Communism's attractiveness as an alternative to capitalism. He recommended greater selectivity in choosing Third World client states, and more financial support from the East Europeans in order to compete with Western "economic expansion" in the Third World. Indeed, within the past two to three years, some Third World countries which had previously associated capitalism with colonialism, have begun to turn away from centrally controlled economic structures and to seek economic improvement through a gradual adoption of market-oriented mechanisms. This development is still too tentative to be termed a trend, but the widening Third World disillusionment with centrally planned economies serves to reduce one avenue of Soviet entree to the Third World.

92. An additional economic problem for the USSR is the increasing inability of client states to pay hard currency for the arms and other goods and services

provided by the Soviets. Libya is no longer able to bankroll the purchases of Soviet arms for its friends. Indeed, Qadhafi is finding it difficult to sustain his own high level of arms imports from the USSR, and Iraq is increasingly impoverished by the war with Iran and the reduced subsidies from Saudi Arabia and other Persian Gulf states. The Soviets are unhappy with the inability of Angola, Ethiopia, Tanzania, and Zambia to meet arms repayment schedules. Nonetheless, the generous rescheduling of terms for Cuba, Peru, Pakistan, Syria, Ethiopia, Tanzania, and Vietnam indicates that the USSR will not let economic considerations drive policy on what it deems its major interests in the Third World.

### Image Problems and Divergent Interests

93. The Soviets are also encountering a range of obstacles, some of which they create themselves, that limit their influence in the Third World:

- In such countries as Ethiopia, South Yemen, and Vietnam, where the USSR is the main source of foreign support, Soviet personnel are recipients of the usual resentment that stems from a clash of cultures. Soviet behavior often strikes client peoples as obnoxious and overbearing.
- The divergence of strategic interests between the USSR and the Third World clients sometimes leads to serious misunderstandings and difficulties. The USSR has not always supported the regional military engagements of Egypt, Syria, Iraq, and Vietnam in the past, and will be cautious about involvement in future local conflicts, even if this leads to charges of lack of support by the client state.
- Some Third World countries—for example, India, Iraq, and Kuwait—refuse to allow the Soviets access to air and naval facilities even though some of them receive enormous quantities of Soviet military aid. They believe they can deal with the USSR without becoming fatally caught in its embrace.
- Other Third World states that sympathize with many aspects of Soviet policy—India, Tanzania, and Madagascar—are trying to avoid the appearance of close relations with Moscow in order to preserve their nonaligned image and retain the support of moderate Third World states.
- Despite their greater involvement in Third World activities, the Soviets have been excluded from most of the diplomatic maneuvering in the

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Arab-Israeli and Lebanon disputes, from the Rhodesian settlement, from the ongoing Namibia negotiations, and from the Contadora efforts in Central America.

## OUTLOOK

### Prospects for Soviet Policy

94. There is no evidence of reduced Soviet interest or activity in the Third World, despite the array of obstacles and vulnerabilities, the rising costs of empire, and the relative scarcity of major penetration opportunities during the early 1980s. Moscow still views the Third World as the Achilles' heel of the West. The radicalization of postcolonial elites and the anti-US orientation of many "nonaligned" states offer tempting opportunities for the USSR to insinuate itself in ruling circles of Third World countries primarily through military and technical assistance. The prevalence of authoritarian styles of government in the Third World and Soviet willingness to support such governments facilitates Soviet entree. Moreover, leaders of Third World countries know that the USSR will not ask embarrassing questions about drug trafficking, human rights, and democracy. The USSR is likely to consider the potentially heavy costs worth the effort, particularly if it can gain influence in key regional states, threaten or destabilize major allies of the United States, or acquire military rights and facilities.

95. The Soviets may eventually even benefit from the Third World debt crisis. Most debt-ridden and economically depressed Third World countries are pursuing politically unpopular austerity programs imposed by international lending agencies and Western banks as a condition for further loans. The longer this situation prevails without perceptible improvement in the economies of Third World states, the greater the chances of a dramatic backlash. There is a fair chance that at some point a Third World government will conclude that continued attempts to satisfy Western lenders is not worth the pain and trouble, and that a repudiation of foreign debts is preferable to continued economic dictation by international and Western entities, a step that would bring psychic satisfaction to some leaders. There is also a fair chance for the overthrow of Third World regimes by groups or individuals intent on repudiating the debts of the incumbents. Such actions could open new opportunities for Soviet influence building.

96. Political instability has been and will continue to be a common Third World phenomenon. Vulnerable Third World governments will be overturned for a

variety of reasons and many successor governments will seek aid from any quarter. Soviet offers of military and security assistance will appear attractive to rulers whose hold on power is tenuous, or who may see Soviet military aid as a way of retaining control of the armed forces. In such cases, the ideological persuasion of the Third World ruler will be of less consequence than the prospective gains that the local ruler and the USSR perceive in establishing a client-patron relationship.

97. The Soviets will continue to probe in a number of Third World areas, such as the Indian Ocean states, West Africa, and the Caribbean, where weak and impoverished regimes might be attracted by promises of military and economic aid and where Soviet access to ports or airfields could extend the reach of Soviet military power. Even if denied such access, the Soviets would gain if they persuade Third World states to refuse similar rights to the West. The ousting of the US military presence from Iran by the Islamic revolutionaries was a considerable loss to the United States and a plus for the Soviets, even though the United States has taken steps to compensate for that loss and the USSR is currently on bad terms with the Tehran regime.

98. The virtual certainty that a number of pro-Western Third World governments will be overturned in the next few years does not necessarily mean that the USSR will gain accordingly. Some shaky pro-Western governments are likely to be replaced by a different set of leaders who also look to the West. Other successor regimes will seek nonalignment, and still others will be open to the highest foreign bidder. On the other hand, the next few years could also see the toppling of pro-Soviet regimes in the Third World.

99. Depending on the speed and extent of Third World political deterioration, a variety of opportunities will present themselves to the Soviets. It is reasonable to assume, therefore, that the USSR in the next few years will be able to increase its influence in some Third World countries, but it is virtually impossible to predict precisely the locale or the nature of Soviet gains.

100. New Soviet activity in the Third World is likely, however, to result in some corresponding advantage to the United States.

The progressive strengthening of the Soviet hold on Ethiopia prompted neighboring states to seek US security guarantees. And, as noted

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earlier, the Soviet alliance with Vietnam adversely affects Moscow's relations with the ASEAN states, to the benefit of the West.

101. A constant factor in the outlook for the Soviets' Third World policy will be their quest for opportunities to expand their influence to the south, in Iran and the Arabian Peninsula. Enjoying no appreciable influence now, their prospects are conditioned by the great political uncertainties that affect these countries. Despite the institutionalization of its Islamic regime, Iran is bound to experience political turmoil after Khomeini's death that may create opportunities for Soviet penetration. All the states of the Peninsula are vulnerable to destabilizing social and religious forces that could open opportunities for Moscow. Soviet willingness to probe for openings and advantages in an area of such high sensitivity to both the USSR and the West will inevitably give rise to risks of miscalculation and possible superpower confrontation.

#### Effects of Major Variables and Conditioning Factors

102. To an important degree the USSR's dramatic advances in the Third World in the past decade were due to extraordinary opportunities:

- The collapse of the Portuguese empire and the Ethiopian monarchy in Africa.
- The upheaval in Iran and the coup in Afghanistan.
- American disillusion with Third World involvements in the aftermath of Vietnam.

Such circumstances are not necessarily repeatable, but the instability and turmoil likely to prevail in much of the Third World in the late 1980s will assure the Soviets abundant opportunities to make advances. Although we are confident that the Soviets will continue to make the effort and bear the costs, we feel that their prospects for success will depend more than ever on a number of new factors, some of which will be beyond the direct control of the Kremlin decisionmakers.

103. Much will depend upon the degree of political and economic stability in the USSR and in the United States. A major economic depression in the West or a dramatic shift of American public opinion toward isolationism would present the Soviets with opportunities not otherwise available to them. Conversely, political turmoil in Eastern Europe or confusion in Moscow—either in a future leadership succession or in the subsequent consolidation of power—or economic deterioration in the Soviet empire more dramatic than we

now see could put a severe crimp in Soviet Third World activities.

104. The growing capability of the Soviet Union to deploy forces and provide advanced weapons to countries in distant areas is certain to complicate US policy in the Third World. Some trends in modern military technology—for example, cheaper precision-guided munitions (PGM) systems—give relatively weak countries the ability to challenge limited deployments of modern naval and air power. Whether these developments will offset each other, or give a considerable advantage to one side or the other, is difficult to predict. Yet it is worth noting that the USSR is attempting to extend its overseas empire in an era when all nations have access to modern weapons. In this respect, the European imperialists of the 18th and 19th centuries had it easier.

105. Another variable of uncertain dimension is the capability of the USSR to cope with low-intensity warfare of the type now besetting a number of Soviet client states. It is by no means certain that all pro-Soviet regimes can maintain power in their own countries. If a Soviet client regime were to be overthrown by anti-Soviet insurgents, or reached a compromise with the internal opposition by ousting the Soviets, the consequences for Soviet prestige in the Third World would be adverse, but hard to assess at this stage.

106. Meanwhile, the general environment of the Third World will continue to be turbulent and therefore inviting to Soviet penetration, but also not easily controlled because of internal and interstate conflicts, economic distress, and a possibly shifting superpower balance. Local conflicts will often contain risks of escalation that both the USSR and the United States would see as potentially dangerous. It is conceivable that the United States and the USSR will find themselves taking parallel actions to prevent escalation of some conflicts especially in volatile areas and situations—such as the Koreas, or the Iran-Iraq or Lebanon-Syria-Israel arenas. In the main, however, the Soviets will see regional troubles as opportunities to advance their power either by acting against the United States, or by cooperating with it in ways that gain them entry where otherwise they would be on the sidelines.

107. There is a possibility that, facing a variety of obstacles, particularly the intractability of the Third World to great-power dictates or more vigorous US political and military actions to combat their influ-



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ence, the Soviets might deliberately restrain their actions in some lower priority regions as part of a policy to cool the East-West power competition and to buy time for later opportunities. One of the aims of such a tactic would be to encourage US domestic and alliance pressures that inhibit US engagement in Third World areas. However, they would be very unlikely to see this as a permanent retrenchment. They would in no case accept formal limitation on their right to expand their power in the Third World, although they might signal a more restrained policy by voicing some ideological line to the effect that now is the time for consolidation, not expansion.

108. In sum, we believe the USSR will continue to see its actions in the Third World primarily as an essential element of East-West rivalry. The Soviet approach will oblige the West to address the challenge of Soviet power and more sophisticated tactics, but this should not obscure the social and economic problems that pave the way for Soviet penetration. This means that the key external variables determining Soviet Third World prospects will be the economic health of the United States, Europe, and Japan; and the durability of US internationalist foreign policy, military strength, and national will to commit considerable power and resources to the Third World arena.

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